

NEWS RELEASE



STATE OF ALABAMA Department of Industrial Relations

News For Immediate Release
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MAY UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN ALABAMA IS 5.9 PERCENT

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA, June 18, 2004 A 5.9 percent May unemployment rate for Alabama is a slight edge up over April's 5.8 percent rate, as well as the May 2003 rate of 5.8 percent.

"So far in 2004, Alabama has a 5.8 percent average unemployment rate, which matches the annual average for 2003," says Phyllis Kennedy, director of the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations. "The state's latest jobless rate represents 126,600 unemployed Alabamians, 1,300 more than the previous month, and 2,000 more than in May 2003."

COUNTY UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

<u>Lowest</u>		<u>Highest</u>	
Shelby	2.4%	Washington	16.3%
Blount	3.0%	Lowndes	13.7%

The comparable national unemployment rate for May is 5.6 percent, unchanged from April and below the 6.1 percent rate in May 2003.

Over the past year, there was a net gain of 100 jobs in wage and salary employment. The majority of the annual growth occurred in trade (retail and wholesale), transportation, and utilities (+5,200); construction (+2,200); leisure and hospitality (+1,500); professional and business services (+1,400); and educational and health services (+1,300). The manufacturing sector lost 7,700 jobs over the year.

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County unemployment rates, Metropolitan Area Unemployment Rates, and an Alabama map of county unemployment rates, are available at: <http://dir.alabama.gov>. Click on "Alabama Labor Market Information Division" under "Quick Links" and follow prompts.